

Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan Assurance of Project Benefits Agreement

January 9, 2002

Whereas, the Everglades ecological system is unique in the world and one of the Nation's great treasures;

Whereas, the Central and Southern Florida Project as originally authorized in 1948 has had unintended consequences on the Everglades and the South Florida Ecosystem;

Whereas, the Water Resources Development Act of 1992 authorized a Comprehensive Review Study (Restudy) of the Central and Southern Florida Project;

Whereas, as required by the Water Resources Development Act of 1996, the Restudy was submitted to the Congress of the United States on July 1, 1999;

Whereas, the Restudy, renamed the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan, was authorized by the Congress in the Water Resources Development Act of 2000;

Whereas, the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (the "Plan") will restore, preserve, and protect the more than 2.4 million acres of the Everglades and the South Florida Ecosystem;

Whereas, implementation of the Plan will require a collaborative effort among Federal and State partners, and the Seminole Tribe of Florida and the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, acting under Federal and State law, to achieve the shared goal of restoration of the Everglades and the South Florida Ecosystem;

Whereas, as the ecosystem is restored, all interests seek a level of assurance that they will receive the anticipated benefits from the Plan;

Whereas, the Federal interest in restoration flows largely from the substantial Federal resources in the ecosystem, including Everglades National Park and other National Parks, National Wildlife Refuges, and National Marine Sanctuaries, which com-

prise a significant portion of the natural system;

Whereas, in recognition of this interest, the Congress established that the overarching objective of the Plan is the restoration, preservation, and protection of the South Florida Ecosystem, while providing for other water-related needs of the region, including water supply and flood protection;

Whereas, section 601(h)(2) of the Water Resources Development Act of 2000 (the "Act"), requires that the President of the United States and the Governor of Florida enter into a binding agreement that ensures that water from the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan will be made available for the restoration of the natural system;

Whereas, section 601(h)(3) of the Act further requires that the Secretary of the Army, with the concurrence of the Governor and the Secretary of the Interior, and in consultation with the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Secretary of Commerce, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, promulgate programmatic regulations to ensure that the goals and the purposes of the Plan are achieved;

Whereas, section 601(h)(4)(A)(iii) of the Act requires that a Project Implementation Report (PIR) identify the amount of water to be reserved or allocated for the natural system under State law;

Whereas, section 601(h)(4)(B)(ii) of the Act requires that the Secretary of the Army shall not execute a Project Cooperation Agreement until any reservation or allocation of water for the natural system identified in the PIR is executed under State law;

Whereas, the State of Florida has the authority to reserve water for the natural system pursuant to Chapter 373, Florida Statutes;

The signatories to this agreement hereby affirm that:

As required by the Water Resources Development Act of 2000, water made available by each project in the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan will not be permitted for a consumptive use or otherwise made unavailable by the State of Florida until such time as sufficient reservations of water for the restoration of the natural system are made by regulation or other appropriate means pursuant to Chapter 373, Florida Statutes, and in accordance with the project implementation report for the project and consistent with the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan.

To effectuate this agreement, the Federal party agrees:

- To include within the President's budget submissions to the Congress requests for Federal appropriations in the amount the President deems necessary to implement the Federal share of the Plan's implementation;
- To initiate authorized project planning and design;
- To work with the State of Florida on developing information jointly to support the adaptive assessment component of the Plan;
- To use the planning process to supply information for both Federal and State legislative oversight requirements;

To effectuate this agreement, the State party agrees:

- To include within the Governor's budget submissions to the Legislature requests for State appropriations in the amount the Governor deems necessary to implement the State share of the Plan's implementation.
- To undertake reservations of water for the natural system upon completion of each PIR, and to ensure that reservations of water for the natural system will be consistent with information developed in the PIR, indicating appropriate timing, distribution, and flow requirements sufficient for the restoration of the natural system.
- To manage its water resource allocation process to ensure that water made available by each project in the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan will not be permitted for a consumptive use or otherwise made unavailable for restoration of the natural system, consistent with the PIR and the provisions of the Water Resources Development Act of 2000.
- To monitor and assess the continuing effectiveness of reservations as long as the project is authorized to achieve the goals and objectives of the Plan.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary released the text of the agreement as signed by the President and the Governor of Florida. An original was not available for verification of the content of this agreement.

Remarks at a Fundraiser for Governor Jeb Bush of Florida January 9, 2002

Thank you all very much. First, it's good to be at the old family reunion. [Laughter] I want to thank Marv and Doro for hosting this reception for our brother, my big little

brother. [Laughter] I want to thank the chairman and the vice chairman of the Republican Party for being here. I want to thank the chairman of the Florida Party.